

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-07

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FM AMEMBASSY DACCA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5798

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L DACCA 4532

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT BG LY

SUBJECT: LIBYAN RECRUITING OF BANGLADESHI MILITARY PERSONNEL

1. EGYPTIAN CHARGE D'AFFAIRES AHMED KAMEL CALLED ON ME AT HIS REQUEST ON AUGUST 15 TO SEEK ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION WHICH WE MIGHT HAVE ABOUT LIBYAN RECRUITING OF BANGLADESH MILITARY PERSONNEL FOR "DEFENSIVE" MILITARY SERVICE IN LIBYA. HE SAID THAT THE LIBYAN EMBASSY HAD ADVERTISED IN A WELL-KNOWN BENGALEE LANGUAGE DAILY, AZAD, ON AUGUST 6 AND 7 FOR VOLUNTEERS. IN THE FOLLOWING DAYS A LARGE NUMBER OF MEN APPEARED OUTSIDE THE LIBYAN EMBASSY, MANY OF THEM IN UNIFORM, TO MAKE APPLICATION FOR SERVICE IN LIBYA. ACCORDING TO KAMEL, THE LIBYANS HAD ALREADY RECRUITED ONE THOUSAND MEN AND WERE SEEKING ULTIMATELY 20,000 OR MORE. THEY ARE BEING OFFERED 1000 TAKAS PER MONTH (A LOT OF MONEY BY LOCAL STANDARDS.) HE HAD SENT PEOPLE TO TALK WITH THE PROSPECTIVE RECRUITS WHO SAID THEY HAD PERMISSION TO ENLIST FROM THEIR COMMANDERS.

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2. KAMEL SAID HE HAD PROTESTED TO THE BANGLADESHI FOREIGN MINISTRY BUT CLAIMED THT THE BDG HAD TAKEN ONLY PRO FORMA ACTION AGAINST THIS RECRUITING EFFORT AND HIS PROTESTS HAD SO FAR BEEN INEFFECTUAL BECAUSE THE LIBYANS HAD BEEN GENEROUS IN BRIBES TO BDG OFFICIALS. HE BELIEVED THAT PREPARATIONS WERE BEING MADE FOR THE ISSUE OF FALSE BD PASSPORTS TO THE RECRUITS AND FOR

FLYING THEM OUT OF DACCA IN "CLANDESTINE" POST-MIDNIGHT FLIGHTS. HE PLANS TO SEE PRESIDENT ZIA AND HAS ASKED THAT HIS AMBASSADOR, WAFFA HEGAZI, RETURN TO DACCA POST HASTE.

3. KAMEL CITED AS EVIDENCE OF BDG FAVORITISM TOWARD LIBYA THAT WHEN AN EGYPTIAN-BANGLADESHI FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY WAS BEING ESTABLISHED HERE THE PRINCIPAL CONDITION THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT PUT ITS OPERATIONS WAS THAT IT SHOULD NOT ENGAGE IN ANTI-LIBYAN ACTIVITY; NO OTHER COUNTRY WAS SPECIFIED. HE ALSO ALLEGED THAT THE LIBYANS HAD HIRED FOUR IMAMS IN FOUR DIFFERENT SECTIONS OF THE CITY TO PROPAGANDIZE IN FAVOR OF LIBYA.

4. INFORMAL TRANSLATION BY THE EMBASSY OF AZAD ADVERTISEMENT AUGUST 7 READS AS FOLLOWS:

FERVENT APPEAL

IT IS HEREBY NOTIFIED BY THE DACCA EMBASSY OF THE SOCIALIST PEOPLE'S LIBYAN ARAB REPUBLIC THAT THIS COUNTRY HAS BEEN ATTACKED, AND HAS DECIDED TO CALL UPON VOLUNTEERS TO DEFEND THE MUSLIM REPUBLIC. THIS COUNTRY (NOTE-LIBYA) HAS ALWAYS EXTENDED ITS HELPING HAND TO MUSLIMS ALL OVER THE WORLD. SO, THIS COUNTRY IS INVITING VOLUNTEER BRETHEN TO ENLIST THEIR NAMES IN THE CHANCERY SITUATED AT
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4 CWN(C), GULSHAN AVENUE, DACCA 12 (END TRANSLATION)

5. EMBASSY OFFICER (DEF.ATT) CONFIRMED THAT MEN SOME IN MILITARY UNIFORM WERE IN FACT LINED UP OUTSIDE LIBYAN CHANCERY AND HIS DRIVER WAS TOLD THEY WERE BEING RECRUITED FOR SERVICE IN LIBYA.

6. COMMENT: KAMAL, WHO IS RATHER EFFUSIVE NORMALLY, WAS QUITE INTENSE AND EXCITED. HE SAID THAT IN THE MIDDLE EAST CONFRONTATION IS SHAPING UP, WITH EGYPT AND SAUDI ARABIA ON ONE SIDE AND LIBYA, ETHIOPIA, AND THE USSR ON THE OTHER. THE INTERESTS OF THE US OBVIOUSLY LAY WITH THE FORMER. HE HOPED WE WOULD SEE IT TO MAKE A DEMARCHE TO THE MFA ABOUT LIBYAN ACTIVITY HERE. (NEEDLESS TO ADD, WE HAVE NO INTENTION OF DOING SO UNLESS INSTRUCTED.)
BERGESEN

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